

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAR ES 00809 241339Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----016862 241346Z /47

O 241315Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7744  
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T DAR ES SALAAM 0809

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK  
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: THE SOVIET-CUBAN PROBLEM

REF: LONDON 2979

1. REFTEL RAISES QUESTION OF HOW TO DEAL WITH AN INTERNAL  
RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT SO AS TO MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITY OF  
POLARIZING EAST-WEST POSITIONS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH WOULD  
OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPLOITATION BY SOVIETS AND CUBANS,  
THEREBY CONFOUNDING OUR ENTIRE AFRICA POLICY.

2. WE AGREE THAT THE QUESTION OF SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IS  
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KEY IN EVALUATING POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION ON RHODESIA.  
WE CAN WELL IMAGINE, IN VIEW OF ANGOLA AND HORN EXPERIENCES,  
A BUILDING UP OF PUBLIC PRESSURE IN THE WEST TO SUPPORT A  
REGIME IN SALISBURY THAT WAS BELEAGUERED BY A RISING SOVIET  
AND CUBAN TIDE.

3. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW IN TANZANIA, THE BEST AND PERHAPS

ONLY WAY TO MINIMIZE SOVIET-CUBAN EXPLOITATION IS TO MAINTAIN FAITH WITH THE FRONT LINE LEADERS. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTAINING FAITH ARE 1) STICKING WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AND 2) CLEAR DISASSOCIATION FROM THE BRITISH IF OWEN'S INCLINATIONS TO SUPPORT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT ARE FOLLOWED.

4. SHOULD WE DO OTHERWISE, SUPPORT OR ACQUIESCE IN AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE WHICH NYERERE HAS GAINED IN THE US WOULD EVAPORATE. WE ANTICIPATE THIS WOULD SPREAD QUICKLY TO MACHEL AND KAUNDA, IF INDEED THEY NEEDED ANY PERSUASION. WHILE OUR NAME HERE WOULD BE MUD (WE CAN LIVE WITH THAT), WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE LIKELY PRACTICAL EFFECTS. LEFT IN THE LURCH BY THOSE IN WHOM THEY HAD TRUSTED, AND WITHOUT ANY HOPE FOR AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT, THE FRONT LINE LEADERS COULD BE EXPECTED TO PUSH ASSERTIVELY FOR A MILITARY SOLUTION. WHILE THEY MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT GREATER SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT, THEY MIGHT CONSIDER THEY HAD NO ALTERNATIVES. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE US WOULD HAVE NO LEVERAGE TO ENCOURAGE THE FRONT LINE TO RESIST SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESSURE TO USE THEIR TERRITORY TO ATTACK RHODESIA. WE WOULD BE LEFT WITH A CHOICE OF A) STANDING ASIDE WHILE EVENTS TOOK THEIR COURSE OR B) COUNTERING COMMUNIST INFLUENCE

DIRECTLY BY PROVIDING MILITARY SUPPORT TO THE REGIME IN  
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SALISBURY.

5. THE COMMUNISTS ARE ALREADY AT HAND; THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR YEARS AND THE CUBANS ARE MAKING SOME INROADS WITH ZAPU. WE HAVE SO FAR CONTAINED THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN RHODESIA, IN PART BECAUSE WE HAVE FOR THE LAST YEAR OR SO HAD SOMETHING TO OFFER THE AFRICAN STATES MOST CONCERNED. WITHOUT SOMETHING TO OFFER, WE WOULD BECOME IRRELEVANT TO THE AFRICANS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO FIND A SOLUTION FOR RHODESIA. AT THE LEAST WE SHOULD FIRMLY AVOID IDENTIFICATION WITH AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AS LONG AS THERE IS ANY PROSPECT OF CIVIL WAR. AT THE SAME TIME WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AS THE BEST PROSPECT FOR A SETTLEMENT. WE FEAR THAT TO DO LESS IS TO HELP CREATE THE KIND OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH SOVIET AND CUBAN INVOLVEMENT MIGHT THRIVE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, NEGOTIATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014